National Tribune.

"To care for him who has borne the battle, and for his widow and orphans."

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EVERY-DAY LIFE of Abraham Lincoln.

By FRANCIS F. BROWNE.

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After Mr. Lincoln's first meeting with Gen. Grant, he was asked regarding his personal impressions of the new commander. He replied: "Well, I hardly know what to think of him. He's the quietest little fellow you ever saw. He makes the least fuss of any man you ever knew. I believe two or three times he has been in this room a minute or so before I knew he was here. It's about so all around. The only evidence you have that he's in any place is that he makes things git! Wherever he is, things move."

THE FIRST "GENERAL" LINCOLN HAD FOUND.

To a subsequent inquiry as to his estimate of Grant's military capacities, Mr. Lincoln responded, with emphasis:

"Grant is the first General I've had. He's a General." "How do you mean, Mr. Lincoln?" his visitor asked. "Well, I'll tell you what I mean," replied Lincoln. "You know how it's been with all the rest. As soon as I put a man in command of the army, he'd come to me with the plan of a campaign, and about as much as to say: 'Now I don't believe I can do it, but if you say so I'll try it on,' and so put the responsibility of success or failure on me. They all wanted me to be the General. Now, it isn't so with Grant. He hasn't told me what his plans are. I don't know, and I don't want to know. I am glad to find a man who can go ahead without me. When any of the rest set out on a campaign they'd look over matters and pick out some one thing they were short of and they knew I couldn't give them, and tell me they couldn't hope to win unless they had it—and it was most generally cavalry. Now, when Grant took hold, I was waiting to see what his pet impossibility would be, and I reckoned it would be cavalry, of course, for we hadn't horses enough to mount what men we had. There were 15,000 or thereabouts up near Harper's Ferry, and no horses to put them on. Well, the other day Grant sent to me about these very men, just as I expected; but what he wanted to know was whether he could make infantry of 'em or disband 'em. He doesn't ask impossibilities of me, and he's the first General I've had that didn't." On another occasion Mr. Lincoln said of Grant: "The great thing about him is his cool persistency of purpose. He is not easily excited, and he has the grip of a bulldog. When he once gets his teeth in, nothing can shake him off."

LINCOLN'S CONFIDENCE IN GRANT.

The President's satisfaction with the new commander was speedily communicated to him in a characteristically frank manner, in a letter dated April 30, 1864:

"LIEUT.-GEN. GRANT: Not expecting to see you before the Spring campaign opens, I wish to express in this way my entire satisfaction with what you have done up to this time, so far as I understand it. The particulars of your plan I neither know nor seek to know. You are vigilant and self-reliant; and, pleased with this, I wish not to obtrude any restraints or constraints upon you. While I am very anxious that any great disaster or capture of our men in great numbers shall be avoided, I know that these points are less likely to escape your attention than they would be mine. If there be anything wanting which is in my power to give, do not fail to let me know it. And now, with a brave army and a just cause, may God sustain you.

"Yours, very truly, A. LINCOLN."

Gen. Grant himself wrote, on this point: "In my first interview with Mr. Lincoln, alone, he stated to me that he had never professed to be a military man, or to know how campaigns should be conducted, and never wanted to interfere in them; but that procrastination on the part of commanders, and the pressure of the people at the North and of Congress, which, like the poor, he 'had always with him,' had forced him into issuing his well-known series of 'Executive Orders.' He did not know but they were all wrong, and did know that some of them were. All he wanted, or had ever wanted, he said, was that some one would take the responsibility and act, and call on him for all the assistance needed."

Gen. Horace Porter, for some time Grant's Chief of Staff, says: "The nearest Mr. Lincoln ever came to giving Gen. Grant an order for the movement of troops was during Early's raid upon Washington. On July 10, 1864, he telegraphed a long dispatch from Washington, which contained the following language: 'What I think is that you should provide to retain your hold where you are certainly, and bring the rest with you personally, and make a vigorous effort to defeat the enemy's force in this vicinity. I think there is really a fair chance to do this, if the movement is prompt. This is what I think—upon your suggestion, and is not an order.' Grant replied that on reflection he thought it would have a bad effect for him to leave City Point, then his Headquarters, in front of Richmond and Petersburg; and the President was satisfied with the dispositions which the General made for the repulse of Early without taking command against him in person."

"THAT PRESIDENTIAL GRUB."

A curious incident revealing the intense interest with which Mr. Lincoln watched the career of Gen. Grant, is related by Mr. J. Russell Jones, an old and trusted friend of the President, who joined the army at Vicksburg in time to witness its final triumph. Soon after Mr. Jones's return to Chicago, the President summoned him to Washington. With eager haste, after the first salutations were over, Mr. Lincoln declared the object for which he had secured the interview: "'I have sent for you, Mr. Jones, to know if that man Grant wants to be President.' Mr. Jones, although somewhat astonished at the question and the circumstances under which it was asked, replied at once: 'No, Mr. President.' 'Are you sure?' queried the latter. 'Yes,' said Mr. Jones, 'perfectly sure; I have just come from Vicksburg; I have seen Gen. Grant frequently, and talked fully and freely with him about that and every other question, and I know he has no political aspirations whatever, and certainly none for the Presidency. His only desire is to see you reelected, and to do what he can under your orders to put down the rebellion and restore peace to the country.' 'Ah, Mr. Jones,' said Lincoln, 'you have lifted a great weight off my mind, and done me an immense amount of good; for I tell you, my friend, no man knows how deeply that Presidential grub gnaws till he has had it himself.'"

We cannot believe that Mr. Lincoln cherished any feelings of jealousy of the rising commander, or desired to interfere with whatever political ambition he might nourish. It was rather his desire to be assured of the single-hearted purpose of a military leader whom he had trusted and to whom he wished to confide still more important services in the conduct of the war.

THE WHISKY ANECDOTE—THE TRUE VERSION.

It may be remembered that early in the war an anecdote went the rounds of the press to the effect that, in reply to a complaint that Gen. Grant had been guilty of drunkenness in the campaigns in the West, Mr. Lincoln remarked that he would "like to find out what kind of liquor Grant drank," so that he might "send some of it to the other Generals." The true version of that characteristic anecdote is this, as we had it from the lips of the late Judge T. Lyle Dickey, who was a Judge of the Illinois Supreme Court at the time of his death, and who, at the time of Grant's famous Vicksburg campaign, was on the General's staff as Chief of Cavalry.

Judge (then Colonel) Dickey had been sent to Washington with private dispatches for the President and the Secretary of War. Lincoln and Dickey had been intimate friends for years, and during the latter's visit to the former on that occasion, Dickey remarked: "I hear that some one has been trying to poison you against Grant by reporting that he gets drunk; I wish to assure you, Mr. President, that there is not a scintilla of truth in the report."

"Oh, Colonel," replied the President, "we get all sorts of reports here; but I'll say this to you, that if those accusing Gen. Grant of getting drunk will tell me where he gets his whisky, I will get a lot of it and send it around to some of the Generals of the army, who are badly in need of something of the kind."

In view of the fact that the movements and operations of the Army of the Potomac were at that time very unsatisfactory to the President and to the country, and that the only progress that the armies of the Union were making anywhere was at Vicksburg under Grant, the point of the President's remark was very palpable.

LINCOLN TELLS GRANT THE STORY OF SYKES'S DOG.

After Mr. Lincoln and Gen. Grant had become personally intimate, they had many enjoyable conversations and exchanges of anecdotes. Mr. Lincoln especially enjoyed telling the General of the various persons who had come to him with complaints and criticisms about the Vicksburg campaign.

"After the place had actually surrendered, said the President, "I thought it was about time to shut down on this sort of thing. So one day, when a delegation came to see me, and had spent half an hour trying to show me the fatal mistake you had made in paroling Pemberton's army, and insisting that the rebels would violate their paroles and in less than a month confront you again in the ranks and have to be whipped all over again, I thought I could get rid of them best by telling them a story about Sykes's dog.

"Have you ever heard about Sykes's yellow dog?' said I to the spokesman of the delegation. He said he hadn't. 'Well, I must tell you about him,' said I. 'Sykes had a yellow dog he set great store by, but there were a lot of small boys around the village, and that's always a bad thing for dogs, you know. These boys didn't share Sykes's views, and they were not disposed to let the dog have a fair show. Even Sykes had to admit that the dog was getting unpopular; in fact, it was soon seen that a prejudice was growing up against that dog that threatened to wreck all his future prospects in life. The boys, after meditating how they could get the best of him, finally fixed up a cartridge with a long fuse, put the cartridge in a piece of meat, dropped the meat in the road in front of Sykes's door, and then perched themselves on a fence a good distance off with the end of the fuse in their hands. Then they whistled for the dog. When he came out he scented the bait, and bolted the meat, cartridge and all. The boys touched off the fuse with a cigar, and in about a second a report came from that dog that sounded like a small clap of thunder. Sykes came bouncing out of the house, and yelled: 'What's up! Anything busted?' There was no reply, except a snicker from the small boys roosting on the fence; but as Sykes looked up he saw the whole air filled with pieces of yellow dog. He picked up the biggest piece he could find—a portion of the back, with a part of the tail still hanging to it, and, after turning it around and looking it all over, he said: 'Well, I guess he'll never be much account again—as a dog.' 'And I guess Pemberton's forces will never be much account again—as an army.'

"The delegation began looking around for their hats before I had quite got to the end of the story, and I was never bothered any more about superseding the commander of the Army of the Tennessee."

"WE'D BETTER LET MR. GRANT HAVE HIS OWN WAY."

When Gen. Grant was ready to begin active operations with the Army of the Potomac, he sent forward all available men from Washington. Secretary Stanton, anxious about the safety of the city, said to Grant one day: "General, I suppose you have left us enough men to strongly garrison the forts?" "No, I can't do that," was Grant's quiet answer. "Why not? Why not? Why not?" repeated the Secretary nervously. "Because I have already sent the men to the front." Said the Secretary, still more nervously: "That won't do. It's contrary to my plans. I cannot allow it. I will order the men back." To this Gen. Grant returned with quiet determination: "I shall need the men there, and you cannot order them back." "Why not? Why not? Why not?" cried the Secretary. "I believe that I rank the Secretary in this matter," remarked Gen. Grant. "Very well; we will see the President about that," responded the Secretary sharply. "I will have to take you to the President." "That is right. The President ranks us both." So they went to the President; and the Secretary, turning to Gen. Grant, said: "Now, General, state your case." But the General calmly replied: "I have no case to state. I am satisfied as it is." This threw the burden of statement on Secretary Stanton, and was excellent strategy. Meanwhile, Gen. Grant had the men. When the Secretary had concluded, Lincoln crossed his legs, rested his elbow on his knee, and said in his quaint way and with a twinkle in his eye: "Now, Mr. Secretary, you know we have been trying to manage this army for nearly three years, and you know we haven't done much with it. We sent over the mountains and brought Mr. Grant, as Mrs. Grant calls him, to manage it for us; and now I guess we'd better let Mr. Grant have his own way." And Mr. Grant had it.

GRANT'S OPINION OF LINCOLN.

The favorable opinion which Mr. Lincoln held of Gen. Grant was strongly reciprocated. A short time before the former's death Grant said: "I regard Lincoln as one of the greatest of men. He is unquestionably the greatest man I have ever encountered. The more I see of him and exchange views with him, the more he impresses me. I admire his courage, and respect the firmness he always displays. Many think from the gentleness of his character that he has a yielding nature; but while he has the courage to change his mind when convinced that he is wrong, he has all the tenacity of purpose which could be desired in a great statesman. His quickness of perception often astonishes me. Long before the statement of a complicated question is finished, his mind will grasp the main points, and he will seem to comprehend the whole subject better than the person who is stating it. He will take rank in history alongside of Washington."

Throughout the war, President Lincoln was keenly solicitous for the welfare of the Union soldiers. He knew that upon them all else depended; and he felt bound to them, not only by official duty, but by the tenderer ties of human interest and love. In all his proclamations and his public utterances, he gave the fullest credit to the brave men in the field, and claimed for them the country's thanks and gratitude. His sympathy for the soldiers was as tender as that of a woman, and his tears were ever ready to start at the mention of their hardships, their bravery, their sufferings and losses. Nothing that he could do was left undone, to minister to their comfort in field or camp or hospital. His most exacting cares were never permitted to divert his thoughts from them, and his anxious and tender sympathy included all whom they held dear. Said Mr. Riddle, in a speech in Congress in 1863: "Let not the distant mother, who has given up a loved one to fearful death, think that the President does not sympathize with her sorrow, and would not have been glad, oh, how glad, to have so shaped events as to have spared the sacrifice. And let not fathers and mothers and wives anywhere think that as he sees the long blue regiments of brave and beautiful ones marching away, stepping to the drum-beat, that he does not contemplate and feel his responsibility as he thinks how many of them shall go to nameless graves, unmarked, save by the down-looking eyes of God's pitying angels." The feeling of the soldiers toward Mr. Lincoln was one of filial respect and love. He was not only the President, the Commander-in-Chief of all the Armies and Navies of the United States, but their good "Father Abraham," who loved every man, even the humblest, who wore the Union blue.

ALWAYS GLAD TO SEE THEM AT THE WHITE HOUSE.

Of Mr. Lincoln's personal relations with the soldiers enough interesting anecdotes could be collected to fill a volume. He saw much of them in Washington, as they marched through that city on their way to the front, or returned on furlough or discharge, or filled the overcrowded hospitals of the Capital. Often they called upon him, singly or with companions; and he always had for them a word, however brief, of sympathy and cheer. Mr. Lincoln was always glad to see soldiers at the White House. They were the one class of visitors who seldom came to ask for favors, and never to pester him with advice. It was a real treat for Mr. Lincoln to escape from the politicians and have a quiet talk with a private soldier.

One day in the Winter of 1862, two soldiers of the Army of the Potomac, who were in Washington on a furlough, called on the President; and one of them thus describes the interview: "We reached the city early in the morning, and proceeded to see the sights. We took in Congress and the Smithsonian, and at sunset, on our return, called at the White House, where we were politely told that it was after hours and we would have to come again. Quite disappointed, as we were standing on the front steps I saw Mr. Lincoln coming through a side gate from the War Department building and approach us with long strides. We gave the military salute in good shape. Meeting us with a hand outstretched for each and a smiling face, he proceeded to give us a prolonged handshaking. 'How do you do, boys? Come to see my house—excuse me, your house, one I occupy for awhile?' My comrade explained that we were late, to which he said he 'guessed he could fix it,' although he believed there was some such rule for citizens, and addressing me said, laughingly: 'Little Mac, as you call him, won't let you come over here just when you want to always, will he?' 'No,' I replied; 'he thinks Pennsylvania avenue already so crowded with "shoulder straps" that we would be in the way.' Talking with us in this vein for several minutes, it did not seem to us that he felt his responsibility resting upon him with much weight. But on learning where we had been that day, he asked if we had seen Mt. Vernon also, and almost instantly changing in his tone and manner, and putting a hand on each of our shoulders, said: 'I want you soldiers to see it all; it's a great opportunity for you; don't neglect it. To many of you it may never occur again. It all belongs to you boys, for you are going to save the country yet. So visit Congress and the Departments, and come here; I am always glad to meet you.' And turning to the door he told some one to relax the rule in our case and show us the mansion, and with a 'Good-by, boys,' he grasped the banister and sprung up the steps four at a time. Never shall I forget Mr. Lincoln's sad look, or his paternal manner toward us."

THE WOUNDED SOLDIER AND HIS MOTHER—SCENE AT A PRESIDENT'S RECEPTION.

Once at a crowded President's reception Mr. Lincoln noticed, standing modestly apart, as though embarrassed at finding themselves in such a large and brilliant assembly, a young man with a crutch, evidently a wounded soldier, and his plainly-dressed mother. Instantly Mr. Lincoln pushed his way toward them, and taking each by the hand, he spoke to them kindly, giving them a cordial welcome, and inquiring their names and residence. Prominent public men and army officers were passed by unnoticed, while the President paid his debt of gratitude to the humble soldier who had suffered in the service of his country.

A HERO REWARDED.

Among the innumerable petitioners for the executive clemency or favor, none were so graciously received as those who appeared in behalf of soldiers. It was half a victory to say that the person for whom the favor was desired was a member of the Union army. From a great variety of characteristic incidents, a few only may be given here.

A young soldier was one night found sleeping at his post, and, according to the inexorable demand of military law, was condemned to be shot. He was a boy in years (only 18), though a man in stature, and his immature frame was unfitted for the performance of a soldier's hard duties. The tidings of his dreadful doom were conveyed to his family, and while they sat talking and weeping over the disgraceful death of the son and brother whom they had resigned to the service of the country, a letter was handed in by a neighbor with the simple words: "It is from him." It contained the parting message of the condemned soldier, written in touching, manly words. On his last day's march with his regiment he had carried the knapsack of a sick comrade in addition to his own, and toward the last, when they had to move at double-quick, he had given his arm to his failing companion, although his own strength was greatly overtaxed. When camp was reached, he took the place of his invalid friend on sentinel duty; but now he had gone beyond his power of endurance. Had grim death fronted him he could not have kept off the stupor which benumbed him. The sick lad, whom he befriended at the cost of his life, begged to be shot in his stead. But the doom of the sleeping sentinel was not to be averted; and so he bade his father and mother and little sister a final farewell. The following evening, as the President sat bending over his desk, the child, who had heard her brother's dying message in the far-off country home, stole up to the kind man unannounced. She pleaded for her brother's life in tearful, artful tones, and then placed in Mr. Lincoln's hands the letter of the doomed one, which told his story better than she could do. The President's eyes moistened. He wrote a pardon and dispatched it at once. Two days after, the young soldier came to the White House with his sister. Lincoln took the youth into his private office, and as he handed him an officer's commission, said: "The soldier who can carry a sick comrade's baggage, and die for the deed without a murmur, deserves well of his country."

"GOD BLESS PRESIDENT LINCOLN."

As he wrote the pardon of another soldier, sentenced to be shot for sleeping while on sentinel duty, the President remarked to a friend standing by: "I could not think of going into eternity with the blood of that poor young man on my hands. It is not to be wondered at that a boy, raised on a farm, probably in the habit of going to bed at dark, should, when required to watch, fall asleep; and I cannot consent to shoot him for such an act." The youth thus restored was afterward found among the slain on the field of Fredericksburg, with a photograph of Mr. Lincoln, on which he had written, "God bless President Lincoln!" worn next to his heart.

"TOO MANY WEEPING WIDOWS."

The Rev. Newman Hall, of London, repeated in a sermon an anecdote told him by a Union officer: "The first week of my command there were 24 deserters sentenced by court martial to be shot, and the warrants for their execution were sent to the President to be signed. He refused. I went to Washington and had an interview. I said: 'Mr. President, unless these men are made an example of, the army itself is in danger. Mercy to the few is cruelty to the many.' He replied: 'Mr. General, there are already too many weeping widows in the United States. For God's sake, don't ask me to add to the number, for I won't do it.'"

A PARDON SWEETENS SLEEP.

One night Speaker Colfax sought to move the clemency of the President in favor of a deserter who was to be shot. Mr. Lincoln was worn out with the labors of the day; but after patiently listening to the story, he said: "Some of our Generals complain that I impair discipline and subordination in the army by my pardons and respites; but it makes me rested, after a hard day's work, if I can find some good excuse for saving a man's life, and I go to bed happy as I think how joyous the signing of my name will make him and his family and friends."

MERCY BEARS RICHER FRUITS THAN STRICT JUSTICE.

Some New Jersey soldiers had deserted, and were recaptured and sentenced to be shot. A delegation of their friends, one of whom was a brother of one of the condemned men, sought the President at the Soldiers' Home, and importuned him for their pardon. It happened that Mr. Lincoln's old Illinois friends, J. F. Speed and Judge Joseph Gillespie, were visiting him at the time, and became greatly interested in the case. After the delegation had stated their errand, the President replied, pointing out that it would be disastrous to the cause if he should pardon men who had deserted their colors, while the armies were confronting each other; he had no right under such circumstances to expect the men who had remained in the ranks to do their duty. "My heart almost sank within me," says Judge Gillespie," when Mr. Lincoln dismissed them, saying that he would give them a definite answer at the White House at 9 o'clock the next morning. I was much afraid that Mr. Lincoln had made up his mind not to pardon the young men. Speed, who I know had more influence with the President than any living being, suggested that we should tackle him and beg for the boys, which we did in good earnest. We plied him with all the reasons we could muster, and still I was afraid we were not gaining ground. When it came to be time to retire, I said to Mr. Lincoln that I did not think I could sleep unless I knew that he was going to pardon the boys. He said: 'Gillespie, I can't tell you.' 'Well,' said I, 'you can give me an inkling.' Said he, 'All I can say is that I have always found that mercy bears richer fruits than strict justice.' In the morning the delegation were ahead of time, and they were rejoiced beyond measure to receive the pardon for their friends."

(To be continued.)

"WE'D BETTER LET MR. GRANT HAVE HIS OWN WAY."

LETTERS from the FIELD

Contemporaneous Accounts of Events in the History of the 98th Ohio.

BY THE LATE J. M. BRANUM.

NEAR AVERYSBORO, N. C., Friday Morning, March 17, 1865.

Seated in camp in the morning sunshine, waiting for the "assembly" to sound for us to move, I take my paper to give you some more of "my life as a soldier."

We did think while at Fayetteville we were going to get some supplies and the mail, but on Wednesday orders were given for everything to get under way again.

All refugees, prisoners, sick and wounded soldiers, were sent down the river to Wilmington. Information was received that the rebels were concentrating under Gen. Jos. Johnston, in our front, and it is concluded that Sherman desires to make for him before he gets in our way to Goldsboro, as we are bound for that place next; it is thought that will be the end of our raid, and we will rest some time.

Fayetteville was an important place to the Confederacy, and it has derived a great deal of support from it. Besides the Arsenal, it contained foundries, cotton factories, etc. Our corps got a great deal of plunder in the way of provisions and small things; all was equally divided among the regiments. The brigade drew a full wagon load of Richmond manufactured tobacco; cornmeal and meat was also plenty. Sunday evening a friend and I took a walk to town.

It almost put me in the feelings of home. Every family was enjoying peace and quietness. A guard was at each door to prevent plundering. We saw pretty children playing in the evergreen yards; ladies sitting on doorsteps watching the multitude of Yankees passing. It would be interesting to know what they thought of affairs. We were too ragged and dirty to stop and talk to any one, but contented ourselves looking around at what was to be seen. Some little boys informed us the rebel army under Gen. Hardee passed through town the day before we came.

Later in the evening we got into a store and bought a half-bushel dried apples for $5, and a pound of soda for $15—all rebel money. It was a fortunate find for us, and having plenty of rebel money, we "went in" for all we could get. We returned to camp just in time to get orders to move. We did not expect to move for a day or so, but in 15 minutes we were packed up and on the way. No other troops in the world could take down tents, pack up and be going, having no other notice than the bugle call.

We marched through the streets in style, bands playing, and in the moonlight the spectacle was fine. Citizens thronged the doors and streets to see us. Many of the boys had rockets they had gotten at the Arsenal during the day, and at every halt would send them shrieking through the air. The whole procession resembled a "Wide-a-Wake" turnout in Wheeling.

We crossed Cape Fear River on the pontoons and camped at midnight. In the morning we were aroused, and, without breakfast, were marched up the river five miles, and went into camp at 11 o'clock. We got the New York papers of March 4 and learned that Sheridan had whipped Early, and that Sherman, at last accounts, was stuck in the mud somewhere in South Carolina.

Wednesday morning I awoke early and lay contemplating the day's duties. Reveille sounded at 5, and with it came orders to march, very unexpectedly to us. We got up and made preparations. We had about two days' rations of meal, nothing else, and we were to go to Goldsboro, if Jos. Johnston and his 30,000 men would let us. We marched up the river towards Averysboro, two divisions of the Twentieth Corps and ours of the Fourteenth, without any wagons. This meant fighting was expected, as usually each division takes its own trains.

We marched slowly through the deep sandy roads, sometimes crossing swamps. About noon a heavy rain came on. We marched through it, camping eight miles from Averysboro, having made 12 miles. The next morning we marched at 8 o'clock; the roads were very bad, and we crossed several small streams. Indications of a large rebel force ahead were frequent. We saw a wagon load of cannon ammunition that the rebs had abandoned, next a small brass mountain howitzer left spiked in the mud, and we then came to a long line of breastworks they had lately abandoned. Soon we heard the sound of cannon ahead. We supposed it was Kilpatrick again. It continued very briskly.

We hurried on, and passed ammunition trains and pack-mules of the Twentieth Corps ahead. We learn they were fighting. We marched on through the great pine wilderness, swamps and thick underbrush. In a mile we neared the battleground and met companies with wounded. Some one tells us Kilpatrick is killed; one could only expect to hear of him being killed—he is always at the front in a battle. We came to a line of breastworks that the enemy had been driven from. Many of our wounded are lying around and are being cared for.

We can now hear the musketry ahead and see the two divisions of the Twentieth Corps in line of battle. Artillery is then posted at intervals along the line and the beautiful star Spangled Banner waves majestically; horsemen are seen riding briskly about, and it seems the beginning of a battle. Our division marches in and files to the left and takes position on their left, and we march across the great field with tremulous steps.

We well knew that an hour of trial was at hand. The fire on the skirmish-line is very heavy and at times breaks out into volleys, giving us apprehension of a charge by the enemy. We have reports that Johnston is on our front with 30,000 men. If so, we are in a bad fix, away here in this swampy country, with no source of supplies but the poor country about us. No hospital accommodations for wounded, we should not fight a battle here. These are dark hours, and we wish we were at Goldsboro, where we could get rations, clothing and the mail.

Our brigade goes in in two lines of battle; we halt and wait until the other troops get into position. We now learn there has been some heavy fighting near us, and our fellows captured four pieces of artillery and 40 prisoners. It was encouraging. Bullet marks were all about, and near a little pine tree lay a dead rebel, a gray-haired old man, the father probably of some interesting family of children.

We lay here probably half an hour, when orders came to advance. We went forward in beautiful style, and halted at a swamp until the skirmishers had penetrated farther. We advanced cautiously for half a mile, and at last developed the enemy in force behind a strong line of breastworks. The skirmishers took position and kept firing away, while we lay down to escape the flying bullets from the enemy.

We lay waiting for orders all the afternoon and expecting to be ordered to charge, and you may imagine our feelings as we lay there contemplating it. Gen. Slocum is said to have ordered Gen. Davis to charge three times; but "Jeff" did not "see it," and night came on and we did not charge, but sent for pack-mules and got our supper and put in the night lying in line of battle. It rained hard and we had a wretched time trying to bake cakes for supper. Brigades on our right and left tried charging during the afternoon, but could not make it. Our division lost 10 killed and 70 wounded. I don't know what the other divisions lost. The 98th lost none.

[NOTE.—Abruptly, as above, ended J. M. Branum's letters. This was written on Friday morning, March 17, and ends with the letter sheet without a signature, as it was doubtless his intention to keep on with his narrative when and wherever he had the opportunity. This letter was on his person when he fell, two days afterwards, and it reached our family at Bridgeport, O., with all those from Sisters Ferry, narrating the march through South Carolina, after we heard of his death. His last writing was in his diary. The day before his death his diary was written clear to the end of the page, showing how closely he kept his record. The 19th of March and all subsequent pages are blank.—P. D. B.]

FROM LIEUT. BRANUM'S DIARY.

Diary.—Friday, March 17.—Awoke this morning to hear the firing still going on on the skirmish-line. Debate in my mind the probabilities of our having to charge the rebel works. Reveille—breakfast. The word goes around that the "Johnnies" are gone. Pack up ready to move. Lay in the sunshine until 10 o'clock reading *Harper's Magazine*. Move out, our brigade in charge of the trains. We made Black River before sundown. Kilpatrick's cavalry cross our route. Continue on marching until 10 o'clock, wading through swamps. Our way was illuminated by pine trees on fire.

CLINTON AND SMITHFIELD CROSS-ROADS, Saturday, March 18.

Moved out early, our division in advance, the Second Brigade second, the 98th second. We feel in excellent spirits. Roads good, but with frequent swamps. Country thickly settled. Foragers got enormous quantities of hams and flour. Pass a Union family; take two of their boys along. Everything promises for a smooth entry into Goldsboro. Cannonading ahead; hurry forward, form in line of battle, advance a mile; rebs retire before our skirmish-line. Some of the 121st wounded. Sherman comes up; we go no further during the day, but camp for the night.

[NOTE.—The New York papers of Friday morning, March 24, 1865, gave the first news of the battle at Bentonville, N. C., between the left wing of Sherman's army and the Confederate under Gen. Jos. Johnston, and also a list of the casualties; among those noted as "Missing" was Lieut. J. M. Branum. Next day's issue of the papers contained, with others, that of Lieut. J. M. Branum, "Killed." Soon came the following letter.—P. D. B.]

CAMP NEAR GOLDSBORO, N. C., March 26, 1865

MR. ALEXANDER BRANUM, Bridgeport, O.

MY DEAR SIR: It is my painful duty to transmit to you the sad intelligence of the death of your dear son, John Marshall, who was killed at the battle near Mill Springs on Sunday, the 19th inst. Thus